

Series: How to Live as a Christian – Part 3

# Properly Boast!

James 1:9-12 ESV

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter – 2013

Sunday, April 28 at 8:00 &amp; 10:45; Monday, April 29 at 7 PM

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ, as we return to the book of James remember: **The book is practical instruction for Christians!** James did NOT write about being saved; instead, **he told the saved how to live!**

1. **Should Christians Ever Boast?** *Doesn't that sound completely wrong – to boast!* But James wrote: **9 Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation** [in his high position], **10 and the rich [brother boast] in his humiliation** [in his humble situation], **because [the rich brother] like a flower of the grass he will pass away.** // So James addressed both the **lowly or poor Christian** and the **rich Christian**. Each one – *because of his situation* – is to boast (*talk to others*) in a different way!
2. **The Lowly or Poor Christian:** Although his earthly possessions are far less than others, he is to boast (tell others) about his **eternal blessings**, such as: ♦God's forgiveness, ♦God's peace, and ♦God's promise of a wonderful eternity! Since life here is so very short in comparison to eternity, **the poor are called to boast about the life to come!**

3. **The Rich Christian:** Although he *will be tempted* to see his riches as personal accomplishments, *which could lead to trust in self*, he is to boast (tell others) about the **temporary nature** of his earthly life! James wrote this reminder: **11 “For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.”** Solomon wrote this warning in Ecclesiastes: **1 NIV Ecclesiastes 5:13 “I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner...”**
  - a. Therefore, the rich man should say: **“Oh yes, I have many earthly possessions, but they are SO temporary – like flowers, beautiful one day but gone the next!”** Such boasting will help both the rich man and others to keep a *proper perspective* on earthly riches.
  - b. Paul wrote to Timothy: **1 ESV 1 Timothy 6:10 “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith...”** Think about the man who couldn't pass up the double-time pay on Sunday; he reasoned, **“I'll work Sundays for a short time; everything will work out fine.”** But weeks turned to months turned to years; now he is dead in his sins! Jesus was right: **1 NIV Matthew 6:24 “... You cannot serve both God and Money.”**
  - c. Jesus said: **1 NIV Luke 12:15 “...a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”**
    - i. So what does your life consist of?

- ii. What is most important to you – *your possessions or your relationship with God?*

4. **A Summary Statement:** Verse 12 summarizes vv. 2-11:

**12 Blessed is the man who remains steadfast** [*who endures, who doesn't give up*] **under trial, for when he has [by God's grace] stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.** // Life can be tough, so we need God's blessing of wisdom to rightly understand how God is working all things together for good (Rom. 8:28) in our Christian lives! Then, with that wisdom, God will strengthen us to endure every test – and to rightly boast along the way – until we finally receive “the crown of life...” May these words of God *instruct us* and *strengthen us* to endure to the very end:

- a. James wrote about Job: <sup>ESV</sup> **James 5:11** Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job...
- i. After Job received word that his 11,000 animals and 10 children were dead <sup>ESV</sup> **Job 1:21** ...he said, “Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” His trials were great, *but he did not reject the LORD!*
- ii. Then, *by God's grace*, Job remained steadfast; then the Bible tells us the

outcome: <sup>ESV</sup> **Job 42:10** “...the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.”

- b. Jesus wrote these words to the church in Smyrna: <sup>ESV</sup> **Revelation 2:10** Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested... Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.
- c. So what should we do when the going gets very tough? God gave us this answer through David: <sup>NAS</sup> **Psalm 55:22** “Cast your burden upon the LORD, and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.”

**Conclusion:** Let's remember and apply God's Word:

- If we are *in Christ but poor*, how should we boast?
- If we are *in Christ but rich*, how should we boast?

Let us never do such boasting to be saved, *but let us properly boast because we are saved through Jesus' finished work!*

And all God's people said: **Amen!**